



U.S. EMBASSY KABUL
CDROLLE “ACCESS TO JUSTICE” GRANTS PROGRAM

Applicant Guidebook

Program Office:	Interagency Rule of Law Office, U.S. Embassy Kabul
Funding Opportunity Title:	CDROLLE “Access to Justice” Grants Program
Announcement Type:	Grant
Deadline for Applications:	May 31, 2012

1. Executive summary

The Coordinating Director for Rule of Law and Law Enforcement (CDROLLE) at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul is pleased to announce that the Embassy currently accepting applications for the newly launched CDROLLE “Access to justice” Grants Program. CDROLLE invites Afghan organizations to submit project proposals to improve access to the Afghan justice system, address organizational capacity in the Afghan justice sector, and raise Afghan awareness of legal rights. Community and women’s organizations are encouraged to apply. The Department of State will have up to USD 2 million available to award multiple grants for up to \$250,000 each.

CDROLLE has developed these guidelines to assist prospective grant applicants in submitting their applications and for its management of the grants awarded.

2. Background

Rule of Law (ROL) is understood to be a foundational element for the establishment and maintenance of democracy and economic growth, and the vehicle through which fundamental political, social, and economic rights are protected and enforced. The concept assumes the existence of effective and legitimate institutions, primarily from a country’s national government, to administer the law as well as to guarantee personal security and public order. ROL also requires citizen confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of its application, including procedural fairness, protection of human rights and civil liberties, and access to justice. The absence of significant government corruption is considered a prerequisite for effective ROL to be established, because only in corruption’s absence is the supremacy of law upheld.

For Afghanistan, the U.S. Government (USG) has been one of the principal actors supporting the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) in establishing a sound and fair justice system. To this end, the Embassy established CDROLLE’s mission to Afghanistan.

Specifically, CDROLLE assistance programs in Afghanistan have centered on efforts to improve the formal (e.g., Supreme Court, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, and Attorney General's Office) and informal justice institutions, to work on anti-corruption and illicit activities, to support the detentions and corrections system, to deal with policy issues and initiatives relating to strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan, including gender-specific policies, and to support the creation of a strong and functioning civil society.

3. Program Description

The CDROLLE "Access to Justice" Grants Program is a USG initiative, launched in 2011. The objective of this grants program is to give Afghan non-profit and non-governmental organizations, universities, government agencies, community groups, women's organizations, professional associations, social movements, business associations, and advocacy groups the opportunity to develop projects that will strengthen the Rule of Law in Afghanistan and to reinforce their capacity as functional organizations and stronger advocates for justice in the country.

To this end, CDROLLE seeks to fund creative and sustainable Rule of Law project proposals in Afghanistan. Proposals should address issues and concerns based on needs identified by Afghan officials and by the National Priority Programs (NPP) "Law and Justice for All," the NPP "Transparency and Accountability," and their successors. Project proposals must be for a period that does not exceed 1 year.

Subject to the availability of funds, the CDROLLE intends to provide approximately \$2 million in total funding to award innovative grants. Each funded grant award will be from \$10,000 to a maximum of \$250,000. Applicants should note that proposals that are submitted for amounts that exceed this dollar limit will not be considered for funding.

Below is a sample, though not exhaustive, list of the types of Rule of Law projects that CDROLLE will consider funding:

- Projects that improve access to justice, especially for minorities and women;
- Projects that strengthen civil society and build demand for justice;
- Legal and leadership training and development for women and other disadvantaged groups working, or seeking to work, in the justice sector;
- Legal assistance, shelter, and other services for those at risk for or victimized by violence against women and girls;
- Support for on-going anti-corruption and Rule of Law initiatives;
- Projects that strengthen the Government of Afghanistan's public affairs and public awareness initiative within the Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's Office and the Supreme Court;
- Projects that build the capacity of lawyers, judges, investigators, and law enforcement officers to investigate and prosecute crimes, particularly involving violence against

women and girls, in line with the Afghanistan's Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

4. Applicants' eligibility requirements

Eligibility is limited to:

- Nonprofit organizations (NPOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), universities, government agencies, community groups, women's organizations, professional associations, social movements, business associations, and advocacy groups. Preference will be given to organizations that are Afghan-led.
- Commercial firms headquartered in Afghanistan on a "cost only" basis – profit is not allowed under any grant award.

The Embassy encourages organizations that have not previously received international program funding from the USG to apply under this announcement. New applicants must demonstrate expertise and knowledge of the status of access to justice, and ability to communicate with the public, political and community leaders, and other stakeholders in strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan.

Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing. However, the applicant should provide information on any similar project it is implementing with funding from USG, USG contractor, or international organizations. Applicants who include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-USG sources will be more competitive, since cost-sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and will be considered to show great cost-effectiveness.

All potential applicants should be knowledgeable of existing programs in the proposed provinces/regions, including any funded by USG, in order to avoid duplication of effort.

5. Review process

CDROLLE will review all proposals for eligibility. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with all applicable regulations and guidelines. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with CDROLLE. The Rule of Law section of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal.

Proposals will be funded based on an evaluation of how the proposal meets the solicitation review criteria, U.S. foreign policy objectives, and the priority needs of the Rule of Law section. A CDROLLE Review Committee will evaluate proposals submitted under this request. The Review Committee may impose additional conditions and make recommendations on any given proposal in order to enhance the proposed program. Proposals will be evaluated to ensure:

- A dollar limit of \$10,000 to \$250,000;

- A period not to exceed one (1) year;
- Needs based on those identified by Afghan officials and/or by the National Priority Programs “Law & Justice for All” and “Transparency & Accountability”;
- Responsiveness to the solicitation; exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Rule of Law Office’s mission;
- How well they address long-term institution building and sustainable capacity-building results;
- Inclusion of relevant work plan that demonstrates substantive undertakings and logistical capacity of the organization. The work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable and achievable. For complete proposals, applicants should provide a monthly timeline of project activities;
- Capacity for engaging in impact assessments and providing objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes;
- Management of overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria at a level as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Cost sharing is strongly encouraged and is viewed favorably.
- Past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Where applicable, applicants should demonstrate an institutional record of successful programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements. Organizations with a proven track record of implementing Rule of Law programs in challenging environments, particularly in Afghanistan’s provinces outside Kabul, may be given higher consideration. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project objectives. Roles and responsibilities of primary staff should be provided.

6. Application procedures

Applicants must submit project proposals electronically not later than **11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on May 31, 2012**. Applicants are encouraged to use the suggested application format as provided by the CRDOLLE office.

An organization may submit **no more than three (3) proposals**. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of the announcement may not be considered. Proposals that request less than the award floor or more than the award ceiling will be deemed technically ineligible.

Applicants are required to submit their proposal electronically, via e-mail, as an email attachment to the following email address: CDROLLEGrants@state.gov. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all electronic files are successfully received.

Application content: Applicants must follow the Request for Proposals (RFP) instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. **Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.** Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this RFP. Applicants acknowledge that a false statement or willful misrepresentation in the application document is a violation of law that is punishable by a fine of \$250,000, imprisonment of as long as 5 years, or both (18 U.S.C. 1001).

7. Proposal requirements

Section 1 – Applications

Applicants are encouraged to submit their project proposals using the CDROLLE suggested application format. This format can be found online at:

http://kabul.usembassy.gov/request_for_proposals.html

Section 2 – Executive Summary/Problem Statement:

The executive summary should be a maximum one-page overview of what the applicant believes best represents the key features of its proposed program. It must provide a summary of the identified need, a brief description of the overall program strategic approach, proposed activities, expected results as linked to the monitoring and evaluation plan, and the level of funding requested.

Section 3 – Project Goals/Implementation Plan:

The applicant must specify the goals and objectives of the project, relative to the problem statement, and must explain how the program is necessary to Afghanistan and how it meets CDROLLE's mandate to support Rule of Law. The proposed activities should be described in sufficient detail to show how objectives and goals will be met. If applicable, proposals should identify local partners, the target areas for activities, the target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, among other pertinent details. Where appropriate, applicants may include back-up plans if the program or components of the program are not able to be implemented as initially conceived. This section should also describe how success will be measured via performance indicators and a specified monitoring and evaluation plan. Finally, this section must include a time-task plan that clearly identifies the objectives and major activities.

Section 4 – Organizational Capacity:

The purpose of this section is to provide CDROLLE with an understanding of the applicant's capacity to implement the program. Applications must include a clear description of the applicant's management structure and organization experience and background in Afghanistan. The description should include information on the logistical strengths of the organization in Afghanistan, i.e. offices, vehicles, infrastructure, security, etc. Besides information about the organization as a whole, this section must also identify the proposed management structure and staffing plan for the proposed project. A description of the management structure should include: 1) an organizational chart with the proposed key staff; and, 2) roles, responsibilities, and authorities of key personnel.

Section 5 – Appendices (Required):

The proposal submission must include two appendices, with a third, optional appendix to be submitted at the discretion of the applicant. Only the appendices listed below may be included as part of the application:

- A. **Budget (Required)** –The budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories: personnel; travel; equipment; supplies; consultants/contracts; other direct costs; and indirect costs (for more information see paragraph 9, Budget Guidelines). The budget summary must be followed by a budget narrative to clarify and justify individual line-items (i.e. calculation of how the costs were derived per month or year, their necessity, and overall contribution to the program’s cost effectiveness).
- B. **Resumes (Required)** – A resume, not to exceed 1 page in length, must be included for all proposed key staff persons. If an individual for a specific position has not been identified, the applicant may submit a 1-page position description, identifying the qualifications and skills required for that position, in lieu of a resume.
- C. **Letters of Intent (Optional)** – Letters of intent from all partners should be included with the application. The letters must identify the type of relationship to be entered into (formal or informal), the roles and responsibilities of each partner in relation to the proposed project activities, and the expected result of the partnership. Please note that these are not letters of support, and should only be included for those organizations that will play an active role in the project, including those that receive financial support through the project budget. The individual letters cannot exceed 1 page in length, and applicants are limited to submitting up to five letters per proposal.

8. Budget Guidelines

Complete budgets will provide a detailed line-item budget outlining specific cost requirements for proposed activities. Complete applications will include a budget narrative to clarify and justify individual line-items (i.e. calculations of how the costs were derived per month or year, their necessity, and overall contribution to the program’s cost-effectiveness). Applicants must adhere to the appropriate regulations found in 2 CFR 220 (previously OMB circulars A-21, cost principles for education institutions) and 2 CFR 230 (previously OMB circular A-122, cost principles for non-profits).

The proposal line item budget should include the following components, in the suggested format below:

1. Summary Budget
2. Line-Item Budget

		CDROLLE Cost (if applicable)
A. PERSONNEL		
-HQ-based project-dedicated staff salary (X months)	X% of \$X/yr	
-Field-based Country Director salary (x months or year)	X% of \$X/yr	
Subtotal Personnel		
B. FRINGE BENEFITS		
-HQ-based project-dedicated staff fringe (X months)	X% fringe	
-Field-based Country Director fringe (x months or year)	X% fringe	
Subtotal Fringe Benefits		
C. TRAVEL		
a) Field Travel		
<u>Activity 1: Workshop</u>		
-Staff Travel (# staff)	\$X/RT flight/# staff	
-Staff Per Diem (X days)	\$X/day/# day/# staff	
-Participant Travel (# participants)	\$X/trip/# pax	
-Participant Per Diem (X days)	\$X/day/# day/# pax	
<u>Activity 2: Town Hall Meeting</u>		
-Staff Travel (# staff)	\$X/RT flight/# staff	
-Staff Per Diem (X days)	\$X/day/# day/# staff	
-Participant Travel (# participants)	\$X/trip/# pax	
-Participant Per Diem (X days)	\$X/day/# day/# pax	
Subtotal Travel		
D. EQUIPMENT		
-HQ-equipment	\$X/unit	
-Field-equipment	\$X/unit	
Subtotal Equipment		
E. SUPPLIES		
-HQ Printing and Photocopying (X months)	X% of \$X/yr	
-Field Markers and dry erase board	\$X/set	
-Field Telephone (X months)	X% of \$X/yr	
-Field Office Supplies (X months)	X% of \$X/yr	

Subtotal Supplies		
F. CONTRACTUAL		
a) Consultant Fees		
-Policing Specialist/Honoraria (X days/hours)	\$X/consult	
-Translation Fees (X pages)	\$X/page	
Subtotal Contractual		
G. CONSTRUCTION		
a) materials		
H. OTHER		
a) Other Direct Costs		
-Field Office Rent (X months)	X% of \$X/mo	
Subtotal Other		
I. TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES (Sum of A-H Subtotals)		
J. INDIRECT CHARGES		
a) Indirect Costs/NICRA (X% of costs)		
Subtotal Indirect Charges		
K. TOTAL COSTS (Sum I-J)		

Note: This budget is designed to serve as an example of the format for complete budget submissions and is NOT exhaustive. Individual line items included in each applicant's budget should reflect specific program activities.

Summary Budget: Please include the applicant organization name, title and duration of the project, and the following:

- A. Personnel
- B. Fringe Benefits
- C. Travel
- D. Equipment
- E. Supplies
- F. Contractual
- G. Construction
- H. Other
- I. Total direct charges (sum a – h)
- J. Indirect Charges
- K. Total

Line-Item Budget:

A. **Personnel** – Identify staffing requirements by each position title and brief description of duties. For clarity, please list the annual salary of each position, percentage of time and number of months devoted to the project. (e.g., Administrative Director: \$30,000/year x 25% x 8.5 months; calculation: $\$30,000/12 = \$2,500 \times 25\% \times 8.5 \text{ months} = \$5,312.$).

B. Fringe Benefits - State benefit costs separately from salary costs and explain how benefits are computed for each category of employee - specify type and rate.

C. Travel - Staff and any participant travel:

- 1) International airfare
- 2) In-country travel
- 3) Domestic travel in the U.S., if any
- 4) Per diem/maintenance: Includes lodging, meals and incidentals for both participant and staff travel. Rates of maximum allowances for U.S. and foreign travel are available from the following website: <http://www.policyworks.gov/>. *Per diem* rates may not exceed the published USG allowance rates; however, institutions may use per diem rates lower than official government rates. Please explain differences in fares among travelers on the same routes. Please note that all travel, where applicable, must be in compliance with the Fly America Act.

D. Equipment – Please provide justification for any equipment purchase/rental, defined as tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5000 or more.

E. Supplies - List items separately using unit costs (and the percentage of each unit cost being charged to the grant) for photocopying, postage, telephone/fax, printing, and office supplies (e.g., Telephone: \$50/month x 50% = \$25/month x 12 months).

F. Contractual

a) Subgrants. For each subgrant/contract please provide a detailed line item breakdown explaining specific services. In the subgrant budgets, provide the same level of detail for personnel, travel, supplies, equipment, direct costs, and fringe benefits required of the direct applicant. Preference will be given to sub-contractors who are Afghan or Afghan-led organizations.

b) Consultant Fees. For example lecture fees, honoraria, travel, and per diem for outside speakers or independent evaluators: list number of people and rates per day (e.g., 2 x \$150/day x 2 days).

G. Construction – Please provide justification and detailed line item breakdown for land, structures, right-of-ways, architectural and engineering fees, material, site work, demolition, and construction.

H. Other - these will vary depending on the nature of the project. The inclusion of each should be justified in the budget narrative.

J. Indirect Charges - See OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations"

1) If your organization has an indirect cost-rate agreement with the USG, please include a copy of this agreement. This does not count against submission page limitations.

2) If your organization is charging an indirect rate, please indicate how the rate is applied--to direct administrative expenses, to all direct costs, to wages and salaries only, etc.

3) Do not include indirect costs against participant expenses in the Bureau budget, as it generally does not pay for these costs.

K. Cost-Effectiveness – If applicable, include an explanation of cost-share contributions should be included, whether cash or in-kind. In addition, it is recommended that budget narratives address the overall cost-effectiveness of the proposal, including leveraging of institutional or other resources.

9. Award Selection Criteria

Applicants should note that the following criteria (1) serve as a standard against which all proposals will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters that should be addressed in all proposals. The USG will award grants to the applicant whose offer represents the best value to the USG on the basis of technical merit and cost.

Each application will be evaluated by the review committee and other experts, as deemed appropriate. The evaluation criteria have been tailored to the requirements of this RFP.

- A. Technical approach and methodology (30 points): This criterion is intended to measure both the technical approach and methodology needed to execute the program components.
- B. Organizational approach and methodology (30 points): This criterion is intended to measure the organizational approach and methodology of the applicant, as well as accounting for any sub-partners that the applicant may propose to enlist. Provide an overall summary of the organization and structure and key principles, owners and executives. Provide a detailed staffing plan for this specific solicitation that includes identification of all staff and/or sub-consultants, proposed as member of the project team, and the duties, responsibilities, and concentration of effort that apply to each as well as resumes, curricula vitae, or statements of prior experience, qualifications and references.
- C. Demonstrated experience, accomplishments, or capability to program applicable activities in Afghanistan (15 points): This criterion is intended to assess the capability, experience, understanding, and accomplishment of the applicant in Afghanistan, including the applicant's capacity to mobilize quickly and effectively.
- D. Appendices (25 points):
 - Budget: Costs shall be evaluated for realism, control practices, and efficiency. CDROLLE must determine that the costs paid for this award are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities. This will consist of a review of the budget to determine if the overall costs are realistic for the work to be performed and if the costs are consistent with the program narrative.
 - Resumes: The review panel will consider the appropriateness of the selected project director and other key personnel in view of the roles and responsibilities these persons will play in guiding the project through implementation to

completion. Position descriptions submitted in lieu of resumes will be reviewed for the appropriateness of the qualifications and skills identified.

- Letters of Intent: The review panel will consider the types and depth of relationships that the applicant has with local organizations. The panel will also review the letters to determine the willingness of such organizations to participate in the effort, and that all parties have an understanding of their unique roles and responsibilities in terms of the proposed project.

10. Award Administration Information

Award Notices: The grant award shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the USG official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Grantee in person or via mail transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Anticipated Time to Award: Applicants should expect to be notified no later than June 30, 2012, with an anticipated award prior to July 15, 2012. Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the USG, nor does it commit the USG to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the USG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

11. Reporting Requirements

Grantees will be required to submit quarterly program progress reports throughout the project period. Such reports must include information on:

1. Overall status of the project;
2. Actions taken to complete the project;
3. Positive results of the effort;
4. Pictures, if applicable;
5. Afghan partners utilized and contact information; and,
6. Lessons learned and recommendations for future indicators of progress.

In addition to the monthly reports mentioned above, the Grantee will be required to submit quarterly financial reports. Quarterly financial reports are due 30 days after the end of the calendar year quarter (quarter 1: January-March, quarter 2: April-June, quarter 3: July-September, quarter 4: October-December).

Final programmatic and financial reports are due 30 days after the close of the project period. Progress reports at a minimum should be submitted via electronic mail to an address to be provided in the award.

12. Disclaimer

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Embassy, nor does it commit the Embassy to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. All proposals are subject to availability of funds; final award cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal Embassy procedures. Further, CDROLLE reserves the right to reject any, some or all proposals received for any reason. If a proposal is selected for funding, the Embassy has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or to extend the period of performance will be entirely at the discretion of CDROLLE.

13. Contact Information

1. For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact the CDROLLE Office at: CDROLLEGrants@state.gov